

March 7, 2010

Dear Members of the Environmental Committee,

I would like to comment on the State of Connecticut trying to regulate outdoor wood burning furnaces. I have read some articles in the newspapers that highlight the issues that a few irresponsible owners are causing smoke issues for others. Unfortunately, this is not fair to the majority of outdoor wood burning furnace owners who burn responsibly and respectfully in their neighborhoods.

Wood has been used for thousands of years as a valuable source for heating homes. In today's economy, families struggle to pay their bills, heat their homes and put food on the table. The outdoor wood burning furnaces offer hardworking middle class families to survive. I feel it is a shame that you would punish all of society and take away their rights to heat their homes with wood..

I grew up helping my dad and uncles cutting trees, splitting and stacking wood to heat our homes. I enjoy this as a part of my American heritage. Even today, as a grown man, I enjoy working wood and look at it as a way to exercise my body. I have a neighbor who lives about 500 feet away who owns an outdoor wood burning furnace. I have never had an issue with smoke as he is a responsible burner. In fact, I get my exercise helping him gather wood to heat his family's home. The majority of people that heat their homes with wood are the hardworking middle class that is supporting our country. You can not take away their right to burn with wood. Please look at the very few irresponsible owners and make them accountable for their actions. Unfortunately only a few bad apples are burdening the bunch, it is unfair to punish everyone.

Thank you kindly,

Leroy Zeigler
Stafford Springs, CT